

# GAZEBO EXPRESS

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENT SOURCE FOR THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND • JANUARY 2010

## FEDS GIVE GREEN LIGHT TO ENHANCE SAFETY

A federal grant secured by U.S. Rep. Peter Visclosky is providing the financing to make Highland's major thoroughfares safer.

The Police Department will receive \$450,000 to install the Opticom System -- a special traffic control system that pre-empts traffic lights when emergency situations arise.

Police Chief Pete Hojnicky said the system, which is already in place in neighboring communities, is activated by public safety personnel. The activation turns a signal to green allowing first responders -- police, fire and emergency medical services -- to access an intersection in a safe manner.

"This system will undoubtedly create a safe environment for emergency services workers, as well as for pedestrians and vehicular traffic," he said. "We are grateful for Congressman Visclosky's efforts to accomplish this meaningful acquisition for public safety in Northwest Indiana."

Benefits of the Opticom System include:

- Reduced incident response times;
- Improved emergency personnel safety; and
- Increased efficiency of emergency resources.

In addition to public safety use, Chief Hojnicky said the town would like to extend the use of the Opticom system to Public Works during snow season.

"Having our snow plows equipped with this device would allow us to more expeditiously remove snow and spread salt, reducing the wear-and-tear on our trucks from stopping and starting," he said. "With the Opticom system, the trucks would be able



### THE 411 ON OPTICOM

Opticom is a traffic control system that provides a green light -- and with it intersection right-of-way -- to emergency vehicles. Vehicles equipped with the system have an emitter, which broadcasts a visible light and/or an invisible infrared signal to a receiver, which is mounted on or near a traffic signal.

When an equipped intersection confirms a pre-emption signal from an emergency vehicle, confirmation lights are activated. White lights installed at intersections notify the emergency responder that the traffic signal is engaged and will pre-empt traffic. Flashing white lights, which are activated for all other traffic, serve as notice that the red light signals an emergency.

to continue plowing and not have to sit against a red light on midnights when no other traffic is present." .

### IT'S ICE AND SNOW SEASON

There are a few easy steps you can take to help the street department with the mammoth task they face every time it is snowy or icy:

Remove your vehicles from the streets during and after snow events, particularly on designated snow routes.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding snow removal in your neighborhood, call Public Works at (219) 972-5083.

After 4:30 p.m., calls should be directed to the non-emergency police line at (219) 838-3184.

Non-urgent complaints also can be sent to [jlannon@highland.in.gov](mailto:jlannon@highland.in.gov) or [jbach@highland.in.gov](mailto:jbach@highland.in.gov)

### CENTENNIAL CALENDARS

There's still time to get your centennial calendar for \$7 at the following locations:

- **Highland Chamber of Commerce**  
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
Monday through Friday
- **Lamprecht Florist**  
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Monday through Friday  
9 a.m. to noon Saturday
- **Highland Historical Society**  
10 a.m. to noon Saturday

### NEWS TIP? STORY IDEA?

#### GAZEBO EXPRESS

c/o Highland Town Hall  
3333 Ridge Road  
Highland, IN 46322

[gazeboexpress@gmail.com](mailto:gazeboexpress@gmail.com)

## REPORT CRIME ONLINE OR OVER TELEPHONE

The Police Department has created a new reporting system that allows residents to file complaints over the telephone and online.

When a telephone complaint is received and the victim is unaware of known suspects, witnesses or physical evidence to the crime, the 911 dispatcher may ask you if you want an officer to respond to the scene or if you prefer to file the report over the telephone.

Eligible incidents include:

- Theft of property under \$250
- Mischief
- Lost articles under \$250

The same criteria also makes it possible to file a police report at [www.highlandpolice.com](http://www.highlandpolice.com).

The Police Department will still need to contact you to verify the complaint before it is officially documented.

## YOUR COUNCILMAN



### WARD 1

**BERNIE ZEMEN**  
bzemen@comcast.net  
(219) 781-1056



### WARD 2

**MARK HERAK**  
mherak@highland.in.gov  
(219) 838-0126



### WARD 3

**DAN VASSAR - president**  
dvassar@highland.in.gov  
(219) 924-1945



### WARD 4

**BRIAN NOVAK - vice pres.**  
bnovak@highland.in.gov  
(219) 810-7810



### WARD 5

**KONNIE KUIPER**  
kkuiper@highland.in.gov  
(219) 924-7820

# POLICE ACADEMY 11

## RESIDENTS LEARN WHAT IT'S LIKE ON THE INSIDE -- AT THE HIGHLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT

When the Highland Police Department completed its 11th Citizens Police Academy in the Fall of 2009, Evelyn Bevis was among the two dozen graduates.

Her only regret: She didn't take advantage of the opportunity sooner.

"I loved these classes and I learned so very much," Mrs. Bevis said. "There was so much about police and the judicial system I just didn't know -- until now."

Sign-ups are already under way for the next Citizens Police Academy. Applications are available at the police department or online at [www.highlandpolice.com](http://www.highlandpolice.com). Those who participate in the class must be Highland residents or employed by a business in Highland.

Classes are held once a week for nine weeks. Topics include:

- An overview of the Lake County Judicial System;
- Criminal investigations; and,
- Firearms training.

Participants also get a tour of the police department and have the opportunity to ride along with an officer. ☺



## CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to the 2009 graduates of the Highland Citizens Police Academy.

This year's graduates include: Karen Haney, Barbara Wagner, Barbara Kiszenia, Amy Zamora, Charmaine Plautz, Fran Brasher, Evelyn Bevis, Karen Petersen, Bobbi Ferree, Becky Oden, Don Torrenge, Joan Ray, Kay Haworth, Eric Kiszenia, Steve Scheeringa, Ralph Scheeringa, Thomas Kerins, Keith Thompson, Larry Petersen, Mark Ferree, Kyle Bauer, Matt Zembala, Wanda Wenner and Rose Grelecki.

**FOR MORE INFO:** Call Sergeant John Banasiak or Acting Corporal Shawn Anderson at (219) 838-3184.

## COUNCIL ADVANCES PUBLIC SAFETY PLAN

The Town Council has taken several steps to advance a plan to construct a new public safety complex on and near the site of the Municipal Building, 3333 Ridge Road.

The town has agreed to pay \$12,000 to Wilson Estes Police Architects of Mission, Kansas, to design the new complex and has taken steps to acquire two additional properties just west of town hall.

The Town Council purchased two properties in 2009 -- at 3315 and 3309 Ridge Road. The additional properties, which the council would like to acquire in 2010, are located at 3305 Ridge Road and at 8745 Cottage Grove Avenue. The two parcels carry

an appraised value of nearly \$260,000.

The scope of Wilson Estes work will be to analyze the footprint of a new fire station at the existing town hall and draft a plan for a new police station located adjacent to the fire station at Fourth Street and Highway Avenue.

Having the architect provide scenarios for both locations will help the Town Council make a decision about the eventual location of a combined public safety complex.

Council President Dan Vassar said these steps undertaken by the council are a logical next step in the planning process and are necessary for both short- and long-range public safety goals. ☺

## ROAD CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

# MAJOR PROJECTS SLATED FOR 2010

Less than one month after all four lanes of Kennedy Avenue were opened to traffic, the town is planning for 2010 and two major road reconstruction projects on Indianapolis Boulevard and Cline Avenue.

In addition, all four lanes of 45th Street from Kennedy to Kleinman are slated to be repaved this year.


Public Works Director John Bach said the timing of the road projects is critical.

"We have been hoping for funding for these projects for a very long time," he said. "It was the reason we were so insistent that we get Kennedy Avenue near completion in 2009. It will be the major north-south route through Highland during the summer construction season."

The Indianapolis Boulevard project will entail taking the bridge down and replacing the structure with a road that will be constructed at-grade or very nearly at-grade.

The bridge has been the scene of numerous accidents over the years because of slick road conditions and the bridge design itself, which was built to veer northwest at the top of the bridge deck.

The current bike path under the bridge will be replaced with a culvert and lighting to keep the trail connected west of Indianapolis Boulevard.

The Cline Avenue project involves rebuilding and widening the roadway to three lanes south of Ridge Road to 45th Street. As part of the project, the ditches on either side of the road will be replaced by storm drains and lighting will be installed. 

### KENNEDY SPORTS ROOMIER LANES

All four lanes of Kennedy Avenue were opened to traffic in mid-December.

"In order to get the road open, we laid down paving stripes that make the road four lanes -- not the five lanes that people were accustomed to," Public Works Director John Bach said. "We will be changing back to five lanes -- with the center turn lane -- in the spring when traffic light loops will be cut into the pavement and a final coat of asphalt will be applied."

In all, the Kennedy Avenue reconstruction cost about \$9.5 million. The town's share was about \$2 million.

### BRINING SLIPPERY ROADS

Watermark stripes that began appearing on every major thoroughfare in mid-to-late December are giving the town a leg up when it comes to winter

The stripes, which darken the pavement, are a pre-treating brine that can be applied directly to roads weeks before a projected snow or ice event.

"We monitor the weather constantly throughout the fall and winter," Public Works Director John Bach said. "When we know a winter storm is heading our way, we now have the tools to pre-treat all major roads with a salt brine that we mix ourselves as we need it."

The brine is applied using two Public Works vehicles equipped with liquid tanks and spray applicators.

## NEW WATER METERS SAVE TOWN TIME AND MONEY

If you ended 2009 with an older-model water meter, the town wants to make sure you have a new one by the end of 2010.

A multi-year effort to replace all of the town's 9,200 water meters is scheduled for completion Dec. 31.


Since the program began in 2007, nearly half of the meters have been replaced.

Public Works Director John Bach said the Water Board is ramping up the program to replace the remaining 5,200 meters over the next 12 months.

"In addition to getting rid of obsolete meters, this program will mean meter readers will no longer have to enter people's residences or go on their property to detail individual water usage," Mr. Bach said. "Having all new meters will help us become more efficient."

Instead of five individuals working 16 to 17 days per month to canvas the town, the new system will make it possible for one individual to read every meter during the course of one work day each month.

"Currently, it takes about 680 work hours each month to get the job done," he said. "The new meters will make it possible for an individual with the proper equipment to drive every street in town and read every meter electronically using a dedicated radio frequency located inside the vehicle. It will take only eight hours each month to get the job done."

It costs about \$200 to replace each meter. Total cost of the upgrade is expected to be about \$1.84 million. 





## HIGHLAND LITTLE LEAGUE 2010 REGISTRATION

Spring and summer sports seasons are just a few short months away and sign-ups are already scheduled.

### THE RULES:

- Players **MUST** turn 4 by April 30, 2010 to be eligible to play
- Players **MUST** reside in Highland
- **NEW** Players **MUST** provide Birth Certificate & Proof of Residency

DIVISION	AGES
Major Division	11 to 12
Minor A Division	9 to 11
Minor B Division	7 to 8
Rookie Division	6 to 7
T-Ball Division	4 to 6

### SIGN-UP DATES

**Saturday, Jan. 16**

- 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Highland Middle School Cafeteria (enter on the north side of the building.)

**Saturday, Jan. 30**

- 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Highland Middle School Cafeteria (enter on the north side of the building.)

**Saturday, Feb. 13**

- 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Highland Middle School Cafeteria (enter on the north side of the building.)

**Saturday, Feb. 20**

- 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Lincoln Center

**FOR MORE INFO:** Call HLL President Dan Vassar at (219) 924-1945 or e-mail [highlandlittleleague@yahoo.com](mailto:highlandlittleleague@yahoo.com)

# AROUNDTOWN

## THREE NIGHTS TO SUCCESS

Goal setting begins with an awareness of the present and a desire to change the future.

This Achievement Seminar takes you on a quest to reassess your goals and teaches you a purpose-driven and systematic process for determining and achieving what you want. This event is being hosted by The Institute for Self Achievement. Registration deadline is one week in advance of the class.

## THREE-EVENING WORKSHOP

**DATE:** Tuesday, Jan. 19; Wednesday, Jan 20; and Thursday, Jan. 21

**TIME:** 6 to 9 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Lincoln Center

**FEE:** \$250

## SINGLE-SESSION WORKSHOP

**DATE:** Thursday, Jan. 14

**TIME:** 7 to 9 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Lincoln Center

**FEE:** \$20

## PINEWOOD DERBY

This race is not limited to Boy Scouts or even just boys. This race is open to anyone ages 5 and up. Dads, do you remember your own race days and want to compete again? Moms, would you like to show off your own car building skills? Bring your car and race against other Pinewood enthusiasts. Prizes awarded for 1st Place and Best Design.

**DATE:** Friday, Jan. 29

**TIME:** 5:30 p.m. check-in; 6 p.m. race

**LOCATION:** Lincoln Center

**FEE:** \$10 for residents/\$13 for nonresidents

**FOR MORE INFO:** Call the Highland Parks & Recreation Department at (219) 838-0114.

## HORMONE REPLACEMENT

Are you confused about hormone replacement therapy? Do you suffer from hot flashes, night sweats, anxiety, depression, mood swings, loss of concentration/memory, PMS, low libido or sleep disturbances?

Bio-identical hormone replacement therapy is available to those who don't want to use synthetic hormones, prefer not to regulate their hormones with birth control pills or mask their symptoms with anti-depressants.

Learn about the benefits of plant-based human-identical hormones and how to work with your health care professional to determine your hormone levels and specific needs. Question and Answer session will follow the seminar presented by V.J. Damasius, PharmD, of Vyto's Pharmacy in Highland and Hammond. Registration is required.

**DATE:** Tuesday, Feb. 16

**TIME:** 6 to 8 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Lincoln Center

**FEE:** \$5 for residents/\$8 for nonresidents

**TO REGISTER:** Call the Highland Parks & Recreation Department at (219) 838-0114.

## THINK SPRING!

The Highland Library and the Redevelopment Commission will host a series of free gardening classes to help the novice and the master get the most from their plantings.

This year's series will begin in February and continue with sessions each month that include topics such as tips for success in starting seeds, spring clean-up, growing wildflowers, growing herbs and tackling the daunting task of garden pests.

Come for one or join master gardeners for the entire series. All of the programs are free and will be held Thursday evenings at the Highland Library, 2841 Jewett Street.

### Seed Starting

Thursday, Feb. 18 -- 6:30 p.m.

### Spring Clean-Up

Thursday, March 18 -- 6:30 p.m.

### Wildflowers

Thursday, April 15 -- 6:30 p.m.

### Rose Gardening

Thursday, May 20 -- 6:30 p.m.

### Lawn Care

Thursday, June 17 -- 6:30 p.m.

### Obsessive Compulsive Gardening

Thursday, July 15 -- 6:30 p.m.

### Herb Gardening

Thursday, Aug. 19 -- 6:30 p.m.

### Garden Pests

Thursday, Sept. 16 -- 6:30 p.m.

**TO REGISTER:** Call the Highland Branch of the Lake County Public Library at (219) 838-2394.